



JACKSON COUNTY

Roads

Roads and Parks Administration

Steve Lambert
Director

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March 6, 2023

Chair Taylor
Vice Chair Bonham
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business

Re: SB 850, Public Hearing March 7, 2023 8:00 AM

Jackson County strongly urges you to **oppose Senate Bill 850**. This legislation imposes expanded requirements for payments of prevailing wage and adds requirements for mandated apprenticeship programs on public works projects.

If passed, this legislation will only serve to add to the burdens that local governments, such as Jackson County are currently facing in our efforts to implement public improvement projects. Historic inflation has severely limited the number of projects local governments are able to construct. Combined with increased labor expenses, an historic labor shortage, and difficulty in obtaining goods, we are concerned that this bill would only further limit how many contractors are able to bid on our projects. Each limit, or encumbrance placed on a contractor through procurement laws only serves to reduce the pool of potential bidders. Limited competition is not in the best interest of the public.

If the intent is to develop projects for the public good at a cost that is fair and defensible, as it should be, this bill will not help reach that goal. Implementation of this bill is likely to cause a drastic increase in the cost of public improvement projects, which we do not believe is in the best interest of our residents. Simply put, far fewer projects will be done if implemented, or other community services will be reduced to account for the added burden.

We respectfully look to our leaders in Salem to help make public improvement projects more affordable, not more expensive. As government entities are struggling to execute public improvements across the state under historically challenging circumstances that none of us have experienced before, now is not the time to make it more difficult.

I strongly ask you to oppose Senate Bill 850 for the reasons outlined above.

Sincerely,

Steve Lambert, Director